



The Cherry Tree



Volume 3, Issue 4

Command Ombudsman Newsletter

April 2004

USS George Washington (CVN 73)

The Captain's Call

Captain M. J. Erdosy
Commanding Officer, USS George Washington (CVN 73)

Hello family and friends of George Washington!

This is the first week of April and *USS George Washington* is operating in the Arabian Gulf in support of our troops in Iraq. Sounds a lot like last month's letter, doesn't it? Yes, we are fighting the sensation that was presented in the movie "Groundhog Day." We are training and drilling and working hard to avoid the complacency that can creep into our activities when we do what seems like the same thing day after day. I keep reminding our Sailors how important their role is to the stability of the region. Being here on station is making a difference in this part of the world. Your Sailors are really affecting history.

This month will mark the halfway point of *George Washington's* 2004 Deployment. I know many of you are anxious for your loved ones to come home and may have heard nasty rumors about us coming home three months early! **THOSE REPORTS ARE JUST RUMORS! WE ARE STILL SCHEDULED TO BE HOME ON TIME!** If you attended the briefs you know when we will return, if not I suggest you attend the next Family Support Group meeting to learn the return date and the latest schedule for port visits. The information is classified so you won't find it on line or on the *G W* Careline until the day it happens.

You helped the crew enjoy the St. Patrick's Day holiday last month. Your gifts were thoughtful, and the crew has enjoyed the Banners and Calendars, too. Activities like these make the time go by faster for both you and your Sailors. We have taped a half-way video and made some other mementos for the Halfway Celebration that is happening at home on the 24th. If you need information about the event or tickets, please contact an ombudsman. As a reminder, there are other activities planned for the coming months, each taking you one more step closer to the return of your Sailor. Getting involved in these events are a wonderful way to help and make the deployment go by a little faster.

Your Sailors are doing great, and through them *GW* is making a difference in world history. I am very proud of your Sailors and I'm also very proud of you and the steadfast support you continue to provide all of us on *USS George Washington*! Good on you!

Sincerely,

Captain Marty

CMC's Take

CMDCM(SW/AW/SCW) Scott Benning
Command Master Chief, USS George Washington (CVN 73)

Hello *GW* Families! Well, the month of April has moved upon us quickly, and that means we are reaching the half-way point. The family support groups have been working very hard to ensure our Sailors here can feel the love and support from home. Your 18 boxes of goodies and the pillowcase banner were both great ideas and we all thank you for brightening our day. We used the banner and candy as way to get everyone together and to take some pictures and video that you will see on our halfway video that will be played at the Halfway Party. Our canvass shop in the Deck department also made two beautiful banners that all of our Sailors were given the opportunity to sign. They are on their way home and will be displayed at the party as well.

We now have our cruise books on sale on the ship. If your Sailor has not mentioned this, please ask them if they have ordered theirs. They are only \$37.00 each and a memento that will last a lifetime. I assure you that those who do not order one will some day wish that they had. We will not be ordering many extra books this year, so it is important that everyone see their representative and order one now.

Two port visits are behind us and our Sailors have had the opportunity to enjoy culture and relaxation. Our schedule remains very much undecided for the remainder of the deployment. We have heard of many rumors both on the ship and from home. The most accurate way to get information is to attend the Family Support Group Meetings. We have asked our ombudsmen not to discuss schedule items over the phone to the families. In today's environment, it is important to ensure the safety of our crew by practicing good operational security. Your Sailor cannot talk about the schedule via the phone or e-mail and the same principles exist for our ombudsmen, as any of the official phone lines may be monitored by sources that we do not want to have the information. So please take advantage of participating in the Support Group. I have had many comments from spouses who attend that ours is the best they have ever been to. I assure you it is! Our support groups are very focused on coming together to show support for the crew, and you will really enjoy the outstanding spouses that ensure our success at home so that we can be successful at sea.

One final note, I would like to congratulate ACAN Duncan who was selected as our Spirit Award Winner for the month of March. We have an entire crew of great Sailors and he was selected to represent them all for March.

Everyone take care back home, the first half has gone by quickly and I assure you the second will move even faster as you start to prepare for reunions. Thank you all again for all that you do for all of us.

CMDCM(SW/AW/SCW) Scott Benning

Information for all *George Washington* Families

18 April - Bowling Party at Liberty Lane on Norfolk Naval Base at 5 p.m. The shoe rental is free and you bowl 2 games the 3rd is free.

20 April - Last Day to buy your Half Way Party tickets. Contact Cindy Delano at (757) 430-2902 or delanos@cox.net.

20 April- HALFWAY HOME!

24 April - GW's Half Way Party at the Breezy Point Officer's Club on Naval Station Norfolk. Social Hour will start at 6:00 PM and dinner will be at 7:00 PM. This is an adult's party so come out, have some fun, and watch the video being shown from the ship. Tickets are \$10.00 for E7 and above and \$5 for E-6 and below.

George Washington Officer Support Group information

19 April - May Calendar squares are due to Amy Halliwell or one of the contact people. Don't forget they have to be no larger than 12x12.

20 April - All RSVPs need to be to Luanne Beatty for Rowena's in Ghent. Your check of \$15.00 will be your confirmation. Don't miss out!

30 April - Dinner at Rowena's in Ghent at 5:30 PM. This will a special treat as Rowena is opening her tea room just for our club. Come and join us and have a light dinner and tea.
All May goodie bags will be due on this night.

Quotable quotes and basically useless information that will make you smile!

"Duct tape is like the Force: it has a dark side and a light side, and it holds the universe together."

"Women and cats will do as they please, and men and dogs should relax and get used to the idea."

"I have found the best way to give advice to your children is to find out what they want and then advise them to do it"

"I have a theory about the human mind. A brain is a lot like a computer. It will only take so many facts, and then it will go into overload and blow up."

Dubai? Don't mind if we do!

By JOSN Kary Favell

On March 14, after almost a month at sea, *USS George Washington* (CVN 73) and the embarked *Carrier Air Wing 7*, pulled into the port of Jebel Ali for another respite. “*USS George Washington* Sailors come here for a good time, to relax and to buy things for themselves and the people they love. We like helping them do all that and more.”

Sentiments like these from a Dubai taxi driver show how eager Dubai locals were to make *GW*'s second port visit this deployment a smash hit. The five-day journey into the United Arab Emirates proved to be a whirlwind of Arabic cultural experiences *GW* Sailors won't soon forget.

Lt. Cmdr. Matt Bartel capitalized on the acres of gold suok vendors and the bargains they offer tourists from all over the world. While he and many *GW* Sailors have visited UAE several times during other deployments, Dubai's gold prices and quality haven't lost their luster for buyers or wearers. “Dubai is a great city to buy gold in, and I've looked forward to getting something nice for my wife.”

Shopping wasn't the only recreation *GW* Sailors enjoyed during their port visit. While in Dubai, many Sailors took in the tastier aspects of Arabic culture. PR2(AW) Paul Arnold said he used every meal as an opportunity to try as many Arabic flavors as possible. “The food was amazing! I've tasted so many exotic dishes with names I couldn't pronounce, and they were all delicious.”

As usual, *GW*'s MWR team offered Sailors a wide selection of tours to take the guesswork out of port exploration. Golfing, sandboarding, and city-wide sight seeing were all par for the course as Sailors took advantage of MWR's hefty tour schedule.

ASC(AW/SW) Jon Swenson teed off on a golf course adjacent to the course Mark O'Meara shredded during the recent

Dubai Classic. “The golfing was great. The course was very difficult and is one of the very best in the world,” he said.

During the Sunset Safari, Sailors enjoyed a white-knuckled off-road trip through the desert in industrial-strength SUVs, camel rides, more gourmet food than you could shake a sheik at and even an impromptu belly dancing lesson. AT2 Paul Apicella was one of the hundreds of safari goers. “It was an amazing evening. I had a great time and would love to do it all over again.”

The port was not just a success for the fun and excitement had by *GW*'s crew. *GW* Sailors left locals with a favorable impression with their courteous behavior and respectful demeanor.

“I have met many Sailors from *USS George Washington* during their visit,” said Hamody al Masaj, a Dubai tour director. “I like them because they are very curious and excited to see another culture. The Sailors are very polite and it is my hope they will return in the future.”



PHAN Jason Zalasky

Sailors were able to ride camels during the Sunset Safari before being treated to a night of great food and entertainment. Although prone to spitting and biting, these four-legged desert taxi cabs seemed more than happy to give *USS George Washington* Sailors a lift up and over the sand dunes to take in some sights they may have never seen before.



PH3 Leah Stiles

G-3's AOAN Andrew Schmal makes a splash after going down a waterslide at the Wild Wadi Water Park. Even though it was only mid-March, the Middle East temperatures made the park a popular MWR Tour.

Coffey named Chaplain of the Year

By JOSN Kary Favell

On March 2, 2004, the Military Chaplain's Association bestowed the honor of Navy Chaplain of the Year on *USS George Washington's* Chaplain (Lt.) Joseph Coffey. Each year the association awards one chaplain from each service with the Distinguished Service Award. Coffey was selected out of 700 eligible Navy chaplains worldwide.

After hearing the news, Coffey found the revelation very humbling. "It is a great honor to receive this award," he said. "There are many great chaplains either on sea duty or shore rotation who were deserving."

While Coffey may have found the news humbling, his co-workers and friends knew it was only a matter of time. "Chaplain Coffey is very deserving of recognition as Chaplain of the Year," said Chaplain (Cmdr.) Bradford Ableson, *GW's* command chaplain, who describes Coffey as not only

intelligent, wise and compassionate toward everyone, but as a person who defies stereotypes. "He rides a Harley, won the kayaking competition when he was with the Marines and is a fan of every athletic team from Philadelphia. Winning this award in his second active-duty tour speaks volumes about his vast potential for future service. Why was Coffey chosen to be this year's Chaplain of the Year? Ableson said there are several instances that highlight just what an incredible year it has been for his fellow chaplain. "He is providing life-transforming ministry to over 6,000 *George Washington Carrier Strike Group* personnel," Ableson explained. "He trained and certified all Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist on their respective ships from the strike group, including *GW*, *Carrier Air Wing 7*, *USS Vella Gulf* (CG 72), all units of *Destroyer Squadron 28* and *HMCS Toronto* (K 583).

Ableson added that as division officer of the Command Religious Ministries Department, Coffey is responsible for *GW's* 10 religious program specialists who provide 55 programs each week, a pace that will reach over 700 total services before the deployment is over. "On his (Coffey) watch, almost every enlisted Sailor in CRMD executed permanent change of station orders," he said. "Despite almost completely losing all of the organizational knowledge, Coffey rebuilt the staff into a stronger team than the one he inherited."

Not only does Coffey shoulder the weight of being the division officer, he also took on duties as the departmental leading chief petty officer and "principal assistant" to the department head. As Ableson explained, "His magnificent performance was the single-most important factor in CRMD's 100 percent mission accomplishment during *GW's* planned incremental availability at Norfolk Naval Shipyard, and a perfect "zero discrepancies" assessment during the INSURV inspection."

According to Ableson, another key factor in nominating Coffey for Chaplain of the Year was his response to the flight deck accident in September of last year. "From trauma ministry to critical-incident stress counseling, his efforts mitigated tragedy and granted peace."

Coffey first joined the Navy 10 years ago. At that time, he was a member of the Chaplain Candidate Program. His first eight years of service were spent in the Reserves while he attended college, making his recent award even more impressive, as only his last two years have been on active duty. His first active-duty assignment took him to Okinawa, Japan, where he was stationed with the 3rd Marine Division. "I was stationed with 800 Marines while I was in Okinawa," Coffey said. "We spent a lot of time in the field. I really enjoyed the time I spent there."

After leaving Japan, Coffey traveled to Norfolk, where he reported to *GW* in December 2002. Coffey thanks God for giving him the chance to help others. "I have been blessed by this dual calling," he said. "By serving the crew, I'm serving the Lord. I'm very happy about it. The Command Religious Ministries Department is here for every crewmember, no matter what faith. We're here for everyone and eager to serve them in any way we can."

The award will be accepted on Coffey's behalf by Rear Adm. L.V. Laiisello, chief of chaplains, at a ceremony on April 22 in St. Louis, Mo.



PHAN(AW) Joan Kretschmer

Even though Chaplain (Lt.) Joseph Coffey has been on board *GW* for a little under two years, he has transformed CRMD into a stronger team, helping *George Washington Carrier Strike Group* Sailors cope with adversities at sea.

HOT OFF THE PRESS! DON'T MISS THIS CHANCE!



USS George Washington will soon offer **Video TeleConferencing** to Sailors and their families. This is a service designed to let individuals actually see one another as they talk. It's simple and easy. Sailors will coordinate with family, friends and significant others who wish to participate in this great program (families must be in Norfolk or surrounding areas). GW sailors will then contact their department point of contact and sign up. Once a department has collected all names and other information (spouse name, home/work #) a signup sheet will be forwarded to GW's VTC scheduling coordinator who will set up date and time.

USS George Washington ombudsmen will contact those spouses, friends, and significant others on the list, informing them of the date, time, and location.

If you have a sailor aboard USS George Washington with whom you'd like to share this unique experience, start your emails up and contact him or her and tell them that you would like to be a part of this program with them. The actual talk times are fairly short due to the number of people that would like to have this opportunity but it will be well worth it!! Once you contact your sailor and you are sure that you are on the list just sit back and relax and wait for your Ombudsman coordinator to call you. We will give you plenty of advance notice for your time and place.

As summer is nearly upon us, if you are leaving town, please be sure that someone, preferably your spouse, has all of your current emergency information. Just in case.

And last but certainly not least.....

The Top 10 ways to simulate life in the Navy at home!

1. Buy a dumpster, paint it gray and live in it for six months straight.
2. Raise your bed to within six inches of the ceiling.
3. Invite 200 of your not-so-closest friends to come over, then board up all the windows and doors to your house for six months. After the six months is up, take down the boards, wave at your friends and family through the front window of your home...you can't leave until the next day because you have duty.
4. Make your family qualify to operate all the appliances in your home (i.e. Dishwasher operator, blender technician, etc.).
5. Use 18 scoops of budget coffee grounds per pot, and allow each pot to sit five hours before drinking.
6. Have your neighbor collect all your mail for a month, read your magazines, and randomly lose every 5th item.
7. Have your 5-year-old cousin give you a haircut with goat shears.
8. Post a menu on the refrigerator door informing your family that you are having steak for dinner. Then make them wait in line for at least an hour. When they finally get to the kitchen, tell them that you are out of steak, but you have plenty of dried ham or hotdogs. Repeat daily until they don't pay attention to the menu anymore and just ask for hotdogs.
9. Sleep on the shelf in your closet. Replace the closet door with a curtain. Have your kids whip open the curtain about three hours after you go to sleep. They should then shine a flashlight in your eyes and mumble, "Sorry, wrong rack."
10. Set your alarm clock to go off at random during the night, jump up and get dressed as fast as you can, making sure you button up the top button on your shirt, stuff your pants into your socks, and run out into the backyard and uncoil the garden hose.

GW Medical Dept. shines



PHAN(AW) Joan Kretchner

USS George Washington's Physician Assistant, Lt. James Strafford, checks a patient's eyes during a routine exam. Strafford credits family and faith for his choice to join the GW crew.

By JOSN Jennifer Crowell

Each year the association awards one PA with the Physician Assistant Leadership Award. On March 10, 2004, the Naval Association bestowed the honor of Naval Association Physician Assistant of the Year on *USS George Washington's* Lt. James Strafford.

After hearing the news during morning quarters, Strafford found the news an exhilarating surprise. "I was overwhelmed by the news," said Strafford, who first joined the military 25 years ago, and has spent his last four in the Navy. "I've been blessed to have good opportunities to grow. I've been surrounded by so many good leaders over the years, and this award proves the positive in-fluences they had on me."

While Strafford found the news overwhelming, his co-workers say it has been a long time coming. "Lt. Strafford has great concern for his patients," said Cmdr. Andrew Nelson, *GW's* senior medical officer. "He is an excellent clinician and enjoys people. He is an eager worker with a great sense of humor."

Why was Strafford chosen for the NAPA Leadership Award? Nelson listed one of many experiences highlighting an amazing career. "While Strafford was deployed as a member of the Navy Emergency Medical Surgical Team on the Horn of Africa, he was dual billeted as both the physician and Camp Lemonier health care assistant. During that time, his direct leadership led to a new Medical and Dental clinic being designed and built." assistant and Camp Lemonier health care assistant.

Not only did Strafford spend time on the Horn of Africa, he was also stationed in Laos, England, Haiti and Sewell's Point, Norfolk, Va. "I had a lot of fun at each duty station," he said. "Each place I've been to has given me the chance to meet people and explore different cul-



PHAN Jason Zalasky

It's all about balance. Lt. Jacqueline Pollack works with MA1(SW) Heath Forney in a demonstration of how using an aerobics ball requires concentration and the use of all abdominal muscles.

By SN Traleigh Savage

USS George Washington's Health Promotions Team has put out the message that keeping healthy should be a top priority among Sailors. For their extended efforts of campaigning topics from alcohol awareness to proper nutrition, the Promotions Team has been awarded the gold star, the highest honor in the 2003 Command Excellence in Health Promotion.

Receiving an award of this stature is an honor within itself and takes a dedicated committee to achieve. Each command is judged on their merits in the program's different aspects. From there, the points are broken down on a scale using the different categories. "The Health Promotions Team has been very well received by the crew," said Lt. Paul Villaire the Health Promotions Coordinator. "Our programs such as the Smoking Cessation Program and stress management have really been a success."

With healthy, informative programs to stop not-so-healthy habits, being a success makes room for up-and-coming programs to start healthier habits for the next year. "There was a growing interest among Sailors about nutrition, and the committee felt that there was a need for a nutrition program. There are now nutrition classes available in the evenings twice a week which go over basic nutrition, weight loss, and calorie intake. So far it has been very effective," said Lt. Jacqueline Pollock, committee member. "It is an honor and a pleasure working with the committee members because we are making a difference in Sailors' lives. One of the most fulfilling things is talking with individual Sailors who were not educated about proper eating habits and see-

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NAPA *from Page 6*

tures, and I've enjoyed it."

On board *GW*, Strafford is responsible for the ship's Mass Casualty Staging Team and Aft Battle Dressing Station. It was under Strafford's leadership where these two entities shined at the critical moment. "Both stations performed flawlessly during exercises and the September flight deck mass casualty, directly saving fellow shipmates," Nelson said. "Lt. Strafford also acts as Medical Department's Public Affairs representative, making several training videos and writing several articles among others."

"I want the crew to understand Medical doesn't have a one-dimensional mission," Strafford said. "It goes 24 hours a day. We're always there, making sure the ship is ready for war. *GW* is the most amazing place in the world."

After traveling the world, Strafford reported to *GW* in August 2003. He has spent the past seven years as a physician assistant. While he credits being surrounded by good leaders with his success, Strafford says if it wasn't for his family and faith, he wouldn't be on board *GW* today.

"I had a choice. If it wasn't for my wife, I wouldn't have gone through PA school," Strafford explained. "She supported me through school. She supported me during my deployments. Anything I do here is a direct reflection of my wife. Without my family and my faith, I wouldn't be on *GW*."

HEALTH *from Page 6*

ing them a few weeks later, losing weight and enjoying their new fitness level."

But it is not just Medical Department Sailors who make up the committee; other departments have been key players as well. "Between Lt. Pollock and I, we have put together a Back Safety Program to teach Sailors how to lift correctly so they can prevent injury and better their quality of life," said Lt. John Porter, committee member. "It also keeps them able to perform their job so that we as a whole can accomplish our mission."

With having such great results Sailors and committee members can only anticipate what lies ahead this year. "The committee is going to continue to keep charging hard," said Pollock. "Even though we received the gold star, we need to keep doing more for *GW* Sailors, and hopefully next year we will win it again."



*Nothing
beats a
gift from
home!*

Sailors search for their section of the Family Banner as it was spread out in the fo'c'sle. The Banner was made of pillowcases that were decorated by the Sailors' families and friends with pictures of loving faces and messages of encouragement.

PHAN Jessica Davis

GW celebrates women's history

By SN Traleigh Savage

On April 4, *USS George Washington* took time out while under-way in the Arabian Gulf to recognize the historic accomplishments of women during a celebration in the ship's fo'c'sle. The event, coordinated by Chaplain (Cmdr.) Bob Williams, *GW*'s command chaplain, and the command's History and Heritage Committee, was an informative and educational program that included music and various speakers.

The special event, titled "Women Inspiring Hope and Possibility," gave Sailors of all pay grades from various divisions an opportunity to speak about inspirational women from history.

"I was honored and excited to participate in *GW*'s celebration for women's history month," said ITSN Johnette Phillips, who works in the ship's Morale, Welfare and Recreation division. "I was especially anxious to have the opportunity to speak on behalf of Rear Adm. Grace Hopper. Being an information technician pursuing the dream of becoming an officer, Hopper has been an inspiration to me."

Sailors inspired by women in history were not the only ones participating in the event. CS1(SW/AW) Denise Arthur, the Chief's Mess leading petty officer, was on hand providing literature about breast cancer awareness. Arthur was one of the first females to serve on board *USS Kitty Hawk* (CV 63). "We are celebrating our past, our present and future," she said.

Stories were also read about Lenah S. Higbee, Harriet Tubman and Rear Adm. Roberta Hazard. Songs were sung, and music was performed as part of a traditional Navy celebration of heritage and history.

On board *GW*, the History and Heritage Committee consists of crew members from around the ship working to make Sailors aware of naval history. "It makes me proud that as a member of this committee, I can take part in an event that will help educate the crew, and show people a new perspective on the Navy and how we got where we are today," said ASC(AW/SW) Jon Swenson, a committee member.

Aside from hosting celebrations to the crew, the committee has a goal. "We want Sailors to be educated and proud of those who have served before us," said Swenson. "Each Sailor on this ship is out here serving their country in a time when, someday, people will look back and see *GW* was part of a very significant time in history."



ITC(SW/AW) Angie Mitchell reads the history of some of America's most inspirational women as RPC(SW/AW) Melissa Rogers, DKCS(SW/AW) Sylvia Dunn, YNC(SW/AW) Rhonda Moore, ITSN Johnette Phillips and OSC(SW/AW) James Daniels listen. The ceremony paid tribute to women who have made historical contributions.

CPOs Celebrate 111 years of service

By JOC(IUSS) Henry Rice

The Navy chief can trace his or her roots back to the Continental Navy when Jacob Wasbie, a cook's mate, was promoted to "Chief Cook" on board the warship *Alfred* on June 1, 1776. But from that day until the early 1890s, the term chief in the Navy was one of function and not one of rank. It was on April 1, 1893, that General Order No. 409 took affect, establishing the chief petty officer grade.

It is a day chief petty officers recognize as their birthday, and a day they can reflect on being part of the heritage and history of the Navy. MACM(SW) Gregory Ciaccio, who origi-

nally joined the Navy 40 years ago and made chief in 1986, says that a lot has changed over the years in regards to the chief petty officer grade, but over all it is still about the same thing - leadership and taking care of people.

"During my first enlistment, the chiefs rarely came out of the Chief's Mess. They were not as educated as they are today, and they were the first ones to leave work," said Ciaccio, the chief master-at-arms on board *USS George Washington*, and the most senior master-at-arms in the entire Navy. "This didn't mean that they didn't care. If a chief talked to you, you

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did what he said. More often than not, they would only engage a situation when it was truly warranted.”

The modern day chief, Ciaccio explained, puts in more hours and is more engaged in their Sailors’ careers. Being a chief is as much about service to subordinates as it is about leadership. Ciaccio uses a quote from the Bible (Matthew 20:27) as a guide for the role of the Navy chief, “And whosoever will be chief among you, let them be your servant.”

“We have a responsibility to our people,” said Ciaccio. “No chief wants to see their Sailors getting into trouble, going to mast, or fail in anyway. We want to see our Sailors succeed and prosper. It is our duty to give our Sailors the tools and the proper guidance to help them achieve that success.”

No matter the style of leadership, for more than 111 years, the Navy chief has had a unique position in the military. As Adm. Frank B. Kelso II, a former Chief of Naval Operations, put it, “The title ‘Chief Petty Officer’ carries with it responsibilities and privileges no other armed force in the world grants enlisted people. These responsibilities and privileges exist because for more than 100 years, chiefs have routinely sought out greater challenges and assumed more responsibility.”

Becoming a chief is a rite of passage. The chief selects are taught to lead from the front so they are ready to turn in their utilities and assume the responsibilities of wearing the khaki uniform. A former command master chief of Navy Recruiting District Pittsburgh, CMDCM(AW/NAC) William Matteson, now retired, put it like this, “When you are an E-6 and below, you are in the Navy, but when you become a chief, you are the Navy!”

“Being the Navy” means setting the standards for the junior enlisted, training your replacements, assisting the development of junior officers, and personifying the core values of the Navy.

“The chiefs are the glue between all the enlisted and officers at a command,” said Ciaccio. “Because of the environment at sea, the Navy makes that distinction with chiefs being separate from junior enlisted. I think we are treated as well as officers, but throughout the years we have earned that respect, and we have to live up to that.”

Keeping that respect is something chiefs have worked very hard to do over the last 100-plus years.

CMDCM(AW/SW/SCW) Scott Benning, GW’s command master chief, thinks today’s chiefs use the traditions and knowledge passed down from the Navy’s past, but also have the foresight to develop new ways to lead the Sailors of tomorrow.

“Under the Leadership of the Chief of Naval Operations, Adm. Clark, and Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy, MCPON(SS/AW) Terry Scott, the future of our chief petty officers continues to be developed into a leadership resource for our Navy and leadership experience for the development of the Sea Warrior,” Benning said. “The future is bright for the chief petty officers and every year it looks even brighter for the AN, FN or SN on the deck plates that will one day become the chief petty officer of the future during the opening remarks of the chief’s birthday celebration held on board GW last night.

Benning, speaking to the chief’s mess and senior leadership on board GW during a special dinner held last night, talked about how chiefs around the world are getting together to celebrate the 111th anniversary of the chief petty officer rank, but how it has a special meaning to be celebrating on board a ship at sea in the Arabian Gulf. “Right now, we are at the tip of the spear, leading these sea warriors to victory, and that is special,” he said.

The commemoration on board GW, focused on chiefs past, present and future, and CVW-7 command master chief, CMDCM(AW/SW/NAC/FMF) Michael Rang, summed it up by saying, “The Navy chief has long been revered in the military, and we look forward to the chiefs of the future, as we entrust them to lead with the same steadfast leadership as those who have gone before them.”



L-R: ITCM(SW/AW) Joanne Wilds, CCG-8, Rear Adm. Denby Starling, commander *George Washington Strike Group*, CMDCM(SW/AW/SCW) Scott Benning, GW’s command master chief, Commodore Tom Copeman, commander *Destroyer Squadron 28*, YNC(SW/AW) Doug Wright, Capt. Martin Erdossy, GW’s commanding officer, CMDCM(AW/SW/NAC/FMF) Michael Rang, *Carrier Air Wing 7* CMC, and Capt. Kenneth Floyd, commanding officer *CVW-7* cut the cake celebrating the 111th birthday of the chief petty officer.

Department of the Navy
USS George Washington (CVN 73)
Command Family Ombudsman
FPO-AE 09550-2873
Official Business

USS George Washington (CVN-73)

www.spear.navy.mil/gw/

We-Care Line (757) 444-0460
Out of the area 1-800-372-5463

Command Family Ombudsman

gwombud@aol.com

Lisa D. —544-0395

Lisa C. —804-758-9550

Tamara —544-0397

Elizabeth Anne —544-0403

Jennie —544-0401

Sandy —544-5443

Shelby —544-4924

American Red Cross

www.redcross.org



www.ffsncorva.navy.mil

LITTLE CREEK 757-462-7563

Mon-Fri 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

NEWPORT NEWS 757-688-NAVY

Mon-Thus 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. & Fri 7:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.

NORFOLK 757-444-2102

Mon-Fri 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

PORTSMOUTH 757-396-1255

Mon-Fri 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

NORTHWEST 757-421-8770

Mon-Wed 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., Thur 8 a.m. - 6:30 p.m., Fri 8 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

OCEANA 757-433-2912

Mon-Thur 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. & Fri 8 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

YORKTOWN 757-887-4606

Mon-Thurs 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. & Fri 8 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Presence with a purpose!



JNSN Kary Favell listens along with the rest of GW's crew, as George Washington Strike Group Commander, Rear Adm. Denby Starling, explains the importance of the strike group's presence in the Arabian Gulf over SITE TV. "The guys in Iraq are doing a very difficult job under extremely difficult conditions. *They* are the reason that we're out here doing business. If we keep that first and foremost in our thoughts, anything we go through out here is a small price to pay for helping them do what they're doing. This is the best ship and air wing team in the Fleet. These Sailors never cease to amaze me and never disappoint me."